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4. Divorce and the care of the children.
5. Failure to provide adequately for members of the household.
6. Debt, drink, betting and quarrels.
7. Injury to, or the killing of animals which are considered sacred.
8. Defying the Kol social traditions, not listed above.
9. Deciding upon contributions of money or supplies for group religious observances.
10. Property and inheritance when there is a dispute or doubt.

Should the decision of the *panch* not be accepted in some serious dispute, particularly where real property is involved, the matter may be taken to the civil courts. While this method is open and often threatened, it is seldom resorted to. Kols are not often found in the courts, for there is always the chance that they will lose the case and also have to face social boycott of the *panch* for not heeding its decision and advice. In some matters the *panch* itself may advise going to court. If there is a grave offense, such as murder or theft, the police step in and the matter is taken entirely out of the hands of the community. Nevertheless the Kols boast that they are law abiding and that most sections of them have had no police record whatsoever. Enquiry from the police confirmed this claim; in this respect Kols give no anxiety and the police seldom trouble them when some crime has been committed in the larger villages of which Kols form a part.

When a penalty is decided upon the *panch* sees that it is enforced. If the person to be disciplined is amenable to the *panch* the penalty is usually either a fine or a feast. If the latter, the person must feed the leaders of the community and thus express regret for his act; or if a fine is imposed, such, if realized, is usually used for a feast. In the past it is said that the fines were used for the purchase of alcoholic liquors and drinks, and in some places still are; but now-a-days this seems to be largely abandoned. The fine in some cases might even amount to fifty rupees, but for a Kol this is an excessive amount and it is unlikely that so much is ever declared under ordinary circumstances. Five rupees or so is the usual amount for ordinary violations.

INTER-VILLAGE COUNCILS. The general social solidarity of the Kols is further shown by the fact that under the more stable conditions of village life, no single village stands alone in making an important decision affecting one of its members, for there are inter-village federations. Sarat Chandra Roy also reports this among the Kharias.[1] In several

1 *The Kharias*, p. 172.

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623 628 631 centres we found evidence of this inter-village organization. In Malhar there was a *panchayat* composed, theoretically, from members of seven castes; but Kols have inter-village councils of their own and the leaders of each village, along with a few other leading men, occasionally come together when important matters are under consideration. Such a meeting is called only for something which seems vitally important and affects the total life of the community. Their sense of social solidarity is so acute that a matter affecting one is regarded as affecting all. Near Katni there is an inter-village organization which includes twenty to thirty Kol communities, and this federation is said to be very active in matters pertaining to the life of the Kols of that area.

623 628 631 203 [212] Sometimes the heads of the villages in a federation are consulted by sending around a sort of circular, giving information about the case and instructing them to think over the decision which should be eventually reached. Occasionally they are then and there asked to pronounce their opinion. In Barela we were in a house to which had just come a communication, originating in Barela, and which was being circularized among the villages of the federation to which Barela belonged. It was written for the Kols by the village writer of the Kayasth caste and we were able to secure a copy of it. The circular affords a good example of the way in which certain matters are settled, and shows that the matter of eating is serious enough to be called to the attention of the larger group. The translation of the document is as follows:

From Barela *Panch*.

Sri,

To

All the kings (members) of the various *panchayats*, we (the members of the local *panchayats*) send our very respectful greetings. We would respectfully make this complaint that people under your jurisdiction (*i.e.* Kols) eat the flesh of swine cooked by the Kumhars (potters). If this is so why should we not start the pipe with them (have social intercourse with them). You get the animal killed by the Kumhars and then wash it with water that has already been touched by them (and so polluted), and if a girl becomes pregnant you punish the family by the imposition of a fine or a caste dinner.

If these are facts please admit them or if things are otherwise, say so and make your mark (signature). Also

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give your opinion whether you are agreeable to social intercourse with the Kumhars.

This letter should be circulated in the following villages :

1. Kharara Ghat : the whole *panch*, Sahmat, Dhannu, Sunnu.
2. Bargaon : the whole *panch*.
3. Matawar Do.
4. Bharda Do.
5. Panagar Do.
6. Usmer Mohniya.
7. Jatma.

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This letter, without naming the offenders, is a complaint that somewhere in this particular Kol community social intercourse with the potter caste has been allowed without penalty. The Kumhars are among the lowest untouchables and no Kol should eat or drink with them. The *panch* of that particular village was so lax that the matter even went as far as a Kol girl becoming pregnant, due, presumably, to this association. They did not watch over the welfare of the group and began to check it only after it had gone as far as that. To the minds of the complainants the association with the Kumhars should never have been permitted and the rhetorical question is asked, if Kols should not have full intercourse with them, implying that to do so would be to degrade the Kols to the level of the Kumhars. This, of course, would be absurd, but is just what the other *panch* is allowing and so it should be checked. The letter attempts to put a stop to this and gives an example of the way such matters are sometimes handled.

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TOTEMISTIC ELEMENTS IN THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION. The phenomenon of totemism is widespread among the Munda tribes of India, and in many cases it still forms a fundamental feature of the social organization particularly in connection with marriage, kinship, and sexual relations. In certain cases, as with the Oraons,[1] there is a definitely intermediate stage, and endogamy is becoming the rule, but the clans among the more primitive tribes are still exogamous. Among some of the latter type, the Korwas and Birhors[2], for example, the totemistic organization is still quite intact; in contrast, the Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa and the Juangs of Keonjhar, both Munda tribes, have at the present day no totemistic organization.[3] Although

1 Roy, S. C., *The Oraons of Chota Nagpur*, p. 324 ff.
2 Roy, S. C., *The Birhors*, Chapter IV.
3 Roy, S. C., *The Kharias*, pp. 145, 146.